

COTTONWOOD HEIGHTS

PROCLAMATION 2021-01

A PROCLAMATION DESIGNATING EACH JUNE 19TH AS "JUNETEENTH" IN COTTONWOOD HEIGHTS

WHEREAS, the United States of America is made up of people originating from every part of the earth, who are deemed equal not only in freedom but also in justice, both of which are essential for a healthy human civilization; and

WHEREAS, our nation was conceived on July 4, 1776 with the Declaration of Independence, which stated: *"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness"*; and

WHEREAS, despite that founding principle of our independence from British rule, freedom was withheld from enslaved people in our country until January 1, 1863, when President Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation providing that all persons held as slaves within any State *"shall be then, thenceforward, and forever free;"* and

WHEREAS, the Emancipation Proclamation made the permanent abolition of slavery a Union war aim and provided the legal framework for the emancipation of nearly all four million slaves as the Union armies advanced; and

WHEREAS, on June 19, 1865, almost 2½ years later, Major General Gordon Granger arrived in Galveston, Texas and announced the end of both the Civil War and slavery, stating: *"The people of Texas are informed that, in accordance with a proclamation from the Executive of the United States, all slaves are free. This involves an absolute equality of personal rights and rights of property, between former masters and slaves ...;"* and

WHEREAS, Juneteenth, a combination of the words "June" and "Nineteenth," commemorates those events of June 19, 1865 in the state of Texas, and in 1866 Texans began the celebration of Juneteenth with community events such as parades, cookouts, prayer gatherings, musical performances and historical cultural readings; and

WHEREAS, as freed families emigrated from Texas to other parts of the United States, they carried the Juneteenth celebration with them, and since then, 47 states, including Utah, have recognized Juneteenth; and

WHEREAS, African-Americans were among the earliest settlers in the area of Cottonwood Heights, and prominent early settler Green Flake and other black pioneers are buried in Cottonwood Heights; and

WHEREAS, the Cottonwood Heights city council honors the important contributions of those black pioneers and their descendants in the formation and growth of our community, and desires to formally recognize the historic underpinning of Juneteenth and its celebration of an important turning point in our nation;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED by the Cottonwood Heights city council that the City hereby designates each June 19th as Juneteenth in the City, and calls upon all citizens to recognize the important step toward equality commemorated on that date.

DATED this 15th day of June 2021

ATTEST:

By:

Paula Melgar, Recorder



COTTONWOOD HEIGHTS CITY COUNCIL

Michael J. Peterson, Mayor